

SENATE BILL 703

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2003 Regular Session
3r2309

By: **Senators Britt, Colburn, Forehand, Grosfeld, Hollinger, and Jones**
Introduced and read first time: February 20, 2003
Assigned to: Rules

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Availability of Audiology and Speech and Language Services**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing a Study Panel on the Availability of Audiology and
4 Speech and Language Services for children in public school programs;
5 establishing the membership of the Study Panel and its duties; providing for the
6 staff of the Study Panel; requiring the Study Panel to report its findings and
7 recommendations to certain committees of the General Assembly on or before a
8 certain date; providing for the termination of this Act; and generally relating to
9 the study of the availability of audiology and speech and language services in
10 the public schools of the State.

11 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
12 MARYLAND, That:

13 (a) It is the intent of the General Assembly to establish a Study Panel to study
14 the availability of audiology and speech and language services for children in
15 kindergarten through grade 12 in public school programs.

16 (b) There is a Study Panel on the Availability of Audiology and Speech and
17 Language Services for children in the K-12 public school programs.

18 (c) The Study Panel consists of the following members:

19 (1) two members of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President
20 of the Senate;

21 (2) two members of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of
22 the House;

23 (3) the State Superintendent for the Maryland Board of Education, or a
24 designee;

25 (4) a representative of the Maryland Association of Boards of Education,
26 appointed by the Association;

1 (5) two public school personnel designated by a local public school
2 system to oversee hearing and speech and language services within a school system,
3 recommended by the Maryland State Department of Education;

4 (6) two consumer members appointed by the Governor; and

5 (7) two members representing the Maryland Speech Language and
6 Hearing Association, appointed by the Association.

7 (d) The President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House jointly shall
8 appoint co-chairs from among the Senate and House members appointed to the Study
9 Panel.

10 (e) The Maryland State Department of Education shall provide staff for the
11 Study Panel.

12 (f) The Study Panel shall review:

13 (1) the scope of services provided by audiologists and speech and
14 language pathologists in the public school system;

15 (2) the availability of licensed audiologists and licensed and certified
16 speech and language pathologists employed by and on the staff of each of the local
17 public school systems;

18 (3) the amount and cost of contracted services utilized by each of the
19 local public school systems for audiology and speech and language services;

20 (4) the number of vacancies filled by contracted personnel and the total
21 number of vacancies for audiologists and speech and language pathologists in the
22 local school system;

23 (5) the caseloads and workloads for the audiologists and speech and
24 language pathologists in the local public school systems;

25 (6) the number of children without hearing and speech and language
26 services due to unfilled positions for audiologists and speech and language
27 pathologists including the average length of time the children have been without
28 services;

29 (7) the cost of compensatory services and any other legal or
30 administrative costs incurred by the local school systems for children who do not
31 receive hearing and speech and language services; and

32 (8) the number of children in need of hearing and speech and language
33 services in the local public school systems.

34 (g) The Study Panel shall make recommendations as to:

35 (1) the need for audiologists and speech and language pathologists on
36 staff in the local public school system;

1 (2) the need to implement methods to retain and recruit audiologists and
2 speech and language pathologists in the public school system; and

3 (3) whether the current caseloads and workloads for audiologists and
4 speech and language pathologists need to be adjusted to increase hearing and speech
5 and language services for children in need.

6 (h) The Study Panel shall report its findings and recommendations to the
7 Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee and the House
8 Ways and Means Committee, subject to § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, on
9 or before December 1, 2003.

10 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take
11 effect June 1, 2003. It shall remain in effect through December 2003 and, at the end
12 of December 31, 2003, without the necessity of further action by the General
13 Assembly, this Act shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.